people did not demand from the Government that it should institute military operations for the purpose of repossessing itself of the forts which had been seized, they refused to entertain the idea of voluntarily surrendering any of the military posts still in the possession of the Government. They clung tenaciously to the view that the United States was a nation, and that its legitimate authority extended over the people of the States which had undertaken to leave the Union.

In anticipation, apparently, that this would be found to be the attitude of the United States authorities, most of the States which had seceded had, either just prior to their secession or shortly afterwards, taken possession of those forts and arsenals in their borders which were found without a garrison, and had occupied them with detachments of their militia. In this way the control over all the important forts in the Gulf of Mexico—with the exception of Fort Pickens, near Pensacola, and the forts at Key West and Tortugas—had been lost to the Government prior to Mr. Lincoln's accession, while on the Atlantic coast only Fort Sumter remained under the flag. The arsenals and their stores of arms met generally with the same fate.

To the people of the North this wholesale appropriation of the property of the Union was most exasperating. They were wholly unable to look at the matter from the point of view of the seceding States. They could see no justification whatever for their conduct; no aggression of any kind had